



FINAL Meeting Minutes – September 20, 2018
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Carvel Education & Research Center, Georgetown, DE

DECC Voting Member Attendance:

Madeleine Bayard, Rodel Foundation of Delaware; Julie Johnson, Tender Loving Kare Child Care & Learning Centers; Cheryl Clendaniel, The Learning Center; Heidi Beck, Delaware Head Start Association; Gabriela Kejner, Department of Health & Social Services; Dr. Kimberly Krzanowski, Office of Early Learning; Kelli Thompson, Nemours; Meredith Seitz, Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (pending membership).

Ex-Officio Council Member Attendance: Mary Moor, Division of Public Health and Behavioral Health Services; Martha Buell, University of Delaware

Additional Attendees: Diane Frentzel, Delaware Readiness Teams; Jackie Bensel, Division of Social Services DHSS; John Fisher-Klein, Office of Early Learning; Elizabeth Smith, DEAEYC; Kristy Sheffler, DE Stars; Eunice Yoo, DEAEYC; Lisa Miller, DEAEYC; Aisha Ferrell, Office of Early Learning; Jamie Walko, Office of Early Learning Contractor; Michelle Spencer, DEAEYC; Veronica Commodore, University of Delaware; Christine Hoeflich-Olley, Sussex Early Childhood Council; Karen Schreiber, Sussex Preschools; Jennifer Spinks, Giggle Bugs; Christine Stoops, Parents as Teachers; Kelly Sherretz, University of Delaware; Jess Velez, University of Delaware; Tammy Petrowicz, University of Delaware; Casey Christophel, Primeros Pasos; Linda Zankowsky, University of Delaware; Melody Bush, Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families; Caitlin Gleason, Office of Early Learning; Jennie Yeow, Public Allies; Cheryl Doucette, Sussex County Consulting firm; Rayne Aaron, Telamon; Barbara Johnson, Delaware Readiness Teams; Stephanie Wagner, Parents as Teachers; Jere Hutson, Division of Social Services; Chong Yi, Food Bank; Juanita Mireles, La Red Health Center; Paulina Gyan, Division of Public Health; Erik Hochrein, Division of Public Health; Lisa Coldiron, Sussex County Consulting firm; Nykeia Maddrey, Delaware Readiness Teams

Welcome/Call to Order, Approval of Minutes

Madeleine Bayard welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The August 2, 2018 Delaware Early Childhood Council (DECC) meeting minutes were motioned for approval by Heidi Beck and Cheryl Clendaniel and passed with no changes.

Sussex County Early Childhood Council (SECC)

Christine Olley noted that the minutes for the last SECC meeting had been sent out. Minutes were motioned for approval by Stephanie Wagner and Rayne Aaron and passed with no changes. The SECC is currently working on three categories of work including: continuing the CoIIN

grant work which focuses on family engagement, strengthening partnerships for resource and information sharing, and the Go Purple initiative that recently kicked off across Sussex County (information sent with minutes).

Rep. Quinn Johnson was thanked for his work in the General Assembly regarding early learning. He noted that he is working with Jon Sheehan to be at the next DECC meeting (November 15, 2018), and that they continue to highlight the early learning staffing crisis and funding within the legislature. It is hoped that with Stars being a door opener in the budget and Purchase of Care being tied to the market rate, this focus funding for keeping up with rates of early learning will not be a yearly battle.

QRIS/Delaware Stars Revision Presentation

John Fisher-Klein provided progress being made on the Delaware Stars Revision. He noted the highlights of the revisions process including the timeline and data sources (survey responses (from 500 participants), listening sessions, and the early learning Community Conversations). The revisions process is focusing on standards, assessment and verification, training and technical assistance, financial incentives and parent education. The QRIS Revision Team are also looking at some guiding principles as they review structure, quality childhood outcomes, continuity of quality improvement and equity. Meeting attendees met in groups and provided feedback on three key areas – equity, hybrid model and parent engagement.

Equity Feedback:

- Tiered reimbursement rates need to be consistent across the state
- Equity should go beyond the early learning system and be embedded in the community (church, etc.)
- There needs to be an increased push or a re-energized public awareness campaign in order to meet families where they are
- A needs assessment is needed to determine what people need in order to have equity
- Cultural and economic status of children and providers needs to be considered across the board
- Need to include family child care centers in all discussions, as they are sometimes excluded

Additionally suspension and expulsion is an equity issue, and is a policy issue we will weave throughout the revision.

Hybrid Model Feedback:

- There is a need for foundational leadership and management
- Technical assistants and programs need time with the assessors to allow for a more direct system of feedback

Parent Engagement Feedback:

- We need to rethink and better communicate our stars system – parents can understand what a 5 star restaurant or hotel is so we should consider using that messaging
- Need public awareness campaign so that when parents are choosing child care we remind them to “look for the 5 stars”
- Not every five star program is going to fit all families searching for child care

- While a five star childcare facility is great, parents must also think about accessibility and affordability
- Suggested the need to build trust with parents as they will be the ones to sell it to other parents
- Suggested a list the qualities of childcare centers (like you do at a car wash) so parents can choose the center that is best for them based on what they offer
- Suggested we change from a star system to an A, B, C system, which parents can better understand
- We need to be cognizant of the way providers frame De Stars so it isn't a negative connotation

After School Study

Kelly Sherrettz and Jessica Velez gave an overview of the Delaware Extended Learning Study. Highlights of the presentation included that a study will be conducted by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration soon. The study will consist of best practices, stakeholder interviews, a landscape analysis (to determine what exists), a needs assessment (to see what's needed), and a final report (to recommend what should be done).

They also provided their timeline for the survey (to be distributed to DECC members and others on 10/2/18) and outreach which will be conducted this fall, with a final report available in late spring 2019.

They noted that this survey is for after school providers and it will ask them what type of high quality after school programs they need, barriers to obtaining those programs, and any other feedback on this issue.

CCDF Quality Contracts

Jackie Bense with DHSS/Purchase of Care explained that ACF reviews each section of the CCDF Plan and lets their office know what needs to be revised, and then DSS resubmits each piece. A date for final approval on the total plan is not known.

Federal mandates need to be completed by September 30, 2018 and they include eligibility, graduated phase out, background checks and consumer website. They are also looking at new income guidelines, nontemporary and temporary changes in production, copayments (how DSS charges families), and quality set asides for additional training.

She noted that the anticipated additional \$6 million in CCDF funding must be used to pay for the federal mandates, and that if we comply with the federal mandates there is a chance we could get additional funding in the future.

Updates from Office of Early Learning (OEL)

Dr. Kim Krzanowski noted that she has brought together several early learning partners to create the CCDF Quality Spending Working Group. This group will create a proposal which will be submitted to DSS, should there be additional funds remaining after DSS has fulfilled their

federal mandates and for consideration for the use of other DSS funds. The working group is focusing on contracted slots for infants and incentivizing inclusion for the proposal. The proposal will be provided to DSS by end of October, with hopes that DSS will provide feedback on the proposal at the November 15, DECC meeting.

A staffing update was also provided. It noted that Cindy Brown is coming back to OEL as the 619 Program Coordinator. She starts October 1, 2018. The Head Start Collaboration Director final interviews will be held soon, and the Early Learning Transitions position should be filled by end of October.

Deb Rommel of the OEL office provided an update on the Delaware First Online Application. She noted that the application is in a soft pilot stage now and that it should be live by end of the month if all continues to go well with testing. She noted that three public information sessions were recently held and the feedback was positive. She noted that there will be several supports, including the Online Help and Resources link, in place to assist Delaware First applicants as we transition from paper to electronic applications over the next year. The Delaware First Online Application PowerPoint presentation and IMS Account instructions were referenced and will be included with these minutes.

Subcommittee Reports

It was noted that meeting minutes were sent out for the most recent Healthy Young Children and Families Subcommittee. The Early Learning Providers and Workforce Subcommittee Meeting will be held on October 16 from 10am to 12pm at DelTech Terry Campus, Room ETB 714 for anyone who wishes to attend.

Campaign for Grade Level Reading (CGLR) Update

Cheryl Clendaniel gave an update for the CGLR / School Readiness Committee noting that she attended the national meeting in Philadelphia. Highlights from the meeting were that more data is needed regarding children's reading, that there is a focus on trauma-informed practice, and that we need to listen to our communities on how to improve reading. Additionally, it was encouraged to use other states as resources as we work to improve grade level reading. She further noted that we recently completed out mid-year report.

Diane Frentzel of the Delaware Readiness Teams noted that she met with some School Attendance subcommittee members to provide a messaging perspective that we need to "have children somewhere," meaning they should be reading in the homes, schools or their communities. This also aligns to the kindergarten registration kick off that is happening in November, since this is Kindergarten Registration Month.

Community Updates

Madeleine noted that registration is still open for the October 11 Vision Coalition and that the registration link will be shared with the group.

Linda Zankowsky provided information about the new Sussex Montessori School (charter school) that will open in 2020. She shared flyers with attendees and noted that working to open this charter school is a huge community effort and that she looks forward to partnering with the DECC to share information about the school.

Beth Smith of DEAEYC noted their fundraising gala will be held on September 29 at the Cavalier Country Club.

It was also noted that the Making a Difference Conference will be held April 5-6, 2019 and that registration starts in February 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.